

SPRING LAKE - LAKE BOARD REPORT

Written by:

John Nash, SLLB Chairman

Background Information:

1992	<p>Spring Lake Area Residents Association (SLARA) formed. SLARA was started by the lakefront property owners to deal with three issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>water quality</i>• <i>safety on Spring Lake</i>• <i>general property issues</i>
1998	<p>SLARA decided to start a lake board because it would be able to better deal with the water quality issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Petitions were circulated to lakefront property owners- Resolutions were presented to all five lakefront municipalities. These resolutions were passed by all which established the lake board
2000	<p>First SLLB project was proposed and passed. This proposal was to do scientific lake monitoring, lake treatment, education and watershed management.</p> <p>Each lakefront property owner was assessed one unit, back lot owners with lake access were assessed ½ of a unit, and businesses with lakefront property were assessed by their benefit from lake access. The per unit cost per year was \$145.00.</p> <p>The cost was reduced by half in 2003 and in 2004.</p>
2004	<p>SLLB commissioned Grand Valley State University (GVSU) Annis Water Resources Institute to do a very exhaustive study to determine what the best way was to reduce the high phosphorus concentrations in Spring Lake which cause the significant algae growth - resulting in the 'green lake'. GVSU determined that there was a very high concentration of phosphorus in the sediment on the bottom of the lake. This high concentration alone was enough to cause the high concentration of phosphorus in the water column. The solution was to 'cap' the bottom with alum to prevent the release of phosphorus into the water column from the sediment.</p> <p>Proposal to the municipalities and lake property owners was adopted to implement a ten-year plan (2005 thru 2014) including the alum treatment, continued scientific monitoring, education programs, water treatment, and watershed management.</p> <p>As with the original project, each lakefront property owner was assessed one unit, back lot owners with lake access were assessed ½ of a unit, and businesses with lakefront property were assessed by their benefit from lake access. The per unit cost per year was \$190.00.</p>
2005	<p>In June, MDEQ approved the SLLD alum treatment permit. In October – November, alum was spread over the bottom of Spring Lake.</p>
2006 -2008	<p>Spring Lake Township, Spring Lake Village and Ferrysburg all passed lawn fertilizer resolutions that prohibited the use of lawn fertilizer containing phosphorus. It has been proven through extensive soil samples in our area that our soil is so rich in phosphorus that no extra is needed for lawns. As of January 1, 2008, Ottawa and Muskegon Counties both passed county-wide ordinances banning phosphorus in lawn fertilizers.</p> <p>Our scientific studies of Spring Lake have shown lake phosphorus levels down more than 50%, which to us means much improved water quality.</p>